DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 366 387 JC 940 107

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Cepeda, Rita |
| TITLE | A Curriculum for All Students. A Report. |
| INSTITUTION | California Community Colleges, Sacramento. Office of the Chancellor. |
| PUB DATE | 10 Mar 94 |
| NOTE | 12p.; Prepared as Agenda Item Number 13 at a Meeting of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (Sacramento, CA, March 10, 1994). |
| PUB TYPE | Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC01 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Access to Education; Community Colleges; *Curriculum Development; *Educational Demand; *Educational Supply; Open Enrollment; Relevance (Education); School Community Relationship; Student Educational Objectives; Student Needs; *Student School Relationship; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students |
| IDENTIFIERS | *California Community Colleges |

ABSTRACT

The mission of the California Community Colleges, first articulated in the "Master Plan for Higher Education" (1960) and since reaffirmed in California Assembly Bill 1725, is to provide Californians with quality courses and programs in transfer and career education and in the mastery of basic skills and English as a Second Language (ESL). Due to their open door policy, competing priorities, diminishing resources, and student demand for education, colleges face continuous challenges to prioritize and adapt their curriculum to meet multiple challenges. Three factors shape curriculum policy for community colleges: (1) local needs, including student instructional needs, economic development needs, and community education needs; (2) the delineation of function between the California Community Colleges, California State University, and the University of California; and (3) course and program standards. To meet their challenges, the colleges have developed a curriculum with four types of courses, each designed to fulfill one aspect of the college's mission. Degree-credit courses are college-level courses designed to prepare students for transfer and employment. Nondegree-credit courses provide non-college-level work designed to prepare students to succeed in college-level work. Noncredit courses provide instruction to ensure students can participate fully as citizens, including ESL. The final classification is Community service courses, designed to provide, without state funding or college credit, avocational and recreational courses, cultural activities, and community development and recreational activities. (MAB)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED 366 387

Board of Governors
California Community Colleges
March 10, 1994

# A CURRICULUM FOR ALL STUDENTS 13

## *A REPORT*

*Presentation:* *Rita Cepeda, Vice Chancellor*
*Curriculum and Instructional Resources*

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Smith

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

JC 940 107

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Board of Governors
California Community Colleges
March 10, 1994

# A CURRICULUM FOR ALL STUDENTS 13

***A REPORT***

*Presentation:* *Rita Cepeda, Vice Chancellor*
*Curriculum and Instructional Resources*

## Issue

This item presents an overview of California Community College curriculum—degree-credit, nondegree-credit, noncredit, and community service.

## Background

The California Community Colleges are established in law as open access institutions. The statutes establish that the colleges **shall** admit any California resident, and **may** admit any nonresident, possessing a high school diploma or the equivalent and **may** admit any other person who is over eighteen years of age and is capable of profiting from instruction (*Education Code* Section 76000).

By their nature, community colleges are the primary point of access for many Californians seeking public postsecondary education. Given this mission, the community colleges must design and make available a very broad continuum of courses designed to meet the increasingly diverse needs of students who come to our colleges with various levels of academic preparation.

This item describes that broad-based curriculum and provides an explanation of the type of courses that make up that curriculum, as well as the standards that guide the decisions of local curriculum committees.

## Analysis

In an era of competing priorities, diminishing resources, and increased student demand for education, colleges face continuous challenges to prioritize and adapt their curriculum to meet multiple challenges. There are three factors which shape curriculum policy for community colleges: (1) local needs, including student instructional needs, economic development needs, and community education needs;

(2) the delineation of function in the tripartite system of postsecondary education as established for the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California; and (3) course and program standards which establish the quality of coursework to be offered at the collegiate level. The college curriculum is also shaped by collaborative relationships that include independent colleges and universities and the K-12 system.

To meet the challenge established by the key forces that drive the curriculum and to respond to the economic constraints facing the system, community colleges have designed one of the most innovative, flexible, and unique delivery systems in the history of higher education. The key is in the mix of course offerings and the four classifications established to frame that curriculum. The text of this item discusses each of the classifications and their attendant issues.

*Staff:* *Norma Morris, Specialist*
*Curriculum and Instructional Resources*

# A Curriculum for All Students

## Background

This item presents an overview of California Community College curriculum. It highlights the distinct designs of courses, that taken separately or in sequence, serve the diverse instructional needs of students. It includes a brief description of each curriculum mode and lists the major issues currently affecting projected Chancellor's Office staff work, some portion of which will be brought back to the Board for action.

The mission of the California Community Colleges, first articulated in the *Master Plan for Higher Education* in 1960 and since reaffirmed in AB 1725 (1988), is to provide Californians with quality courses and programs in transfer and career education and in the mastery of basic skills and English as a Second Language.

By law, community colleges must admit all Californians who have graduated from high school and may admit those Californians who have not graduated but who are eighteen years old and can profit from instruction. This policy of "open access" is derived from the *Master Plan* and is designed to provide Californians with an equal opportunity for education and training that will enable them to develop fully their potential in the workplace and as citizens, regardless of economic, cultural, or ethnic background.

## Changing Student Need

Demand for community college education in California is expected to remain strong throughout this decade as a result of the unemployed seeking retraining during a slow economic recovery, continued immigration, rapidly increasing numbers of high school graduates, and the potential redirection of students from the University of California and the California State University due to budget constraints. Demand also continues to grow in response to the demands of economic development, including the need for rapid technology transfer, the emergence of cutting edge technical occupations, and continuous skill upgrading in the work force.

As California's population becomes more diverse, older, and increasingly in need of more sophisticated postsecondary education, the California Community Colleges are enrolling more students who are older, working full time, needing child care, and seeking off-campus classes at flexible hours. There are also more students who need instruction in English as a Second Language and in basic skills, need financial aid, and, as the first in their families to attend college, need special services and encouragement.

## The Curricular Response

A broad array of well structured curriculum choices is needed to respond to the challenges. Effective support of a rapidly evolving labor market and continued economic competitiveness depend upon the ability of California's community colleges to provide courses and programs specifically tailored to these many demands.

To assure sufficient scope and sufficient structure to its curriculum, California Community Colleges draw clear distinctions between four kinds of courses, each with a different role in fulfilling the mission. As depicted in the following chart, each type has specific requirements appropriate to its distinctive purpose. Each mode provides students with transitional choices and opportunities to meet individual goals and needs. Together, the four modes both meet different goals and allow for a carefully phased transition from initial, often narrow goals (e.g., job certification or ESL), to longer range, more challenging goals (e.g., transfer to a baccalaureate or professional degree sequence). These transitions can occur during the student's initial time at college or over many years, as students return to move up the career ladder, update their skills, or shift to new occupations.

### Comparison of Curricular Modes

| Degree-Credit | Nondegree-Credit | Noncredit | Community Service |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Purpose: To prepare students for transfer and employment* | *Purpose: To prepare students to succeed in college-level work* | *Purpose: To prepare students to survive and participate fully as citizens* | *Purpose: To respond to community needs* |
| • Content and objectives are "college level"<br>• Student evaluation includes extensive use of essay<br>• High critical-thinking expectation<br>• Two hours outside work for each class hour<br>• Limited repeatability<br>• Supported by State funds | • Content and objectives are not "college level"<br>• Student evaluation may include demonstration as well as essay<br>• Some critical-thinking expected<br>• Two hours outside work for each class hour<br>• Limited to 30 semester units per student<br>• Supported by State funds | • Content and objectives include instruction and training for:<br>▸ ESL<br>▸ Vocational<br>▸ Older Adults<br>▸ Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills<br>▸ Citizenship<br>▸ Health and Safety<br>▸ Disabled<br>▸ Parent EDucation<br>▸ Home Economics<br>• Not subject to repeatability limits<br>• Supported by State funds | • Content and objectives are locally defined<br>• Not subject to Chancellor's Office approval<br>• Not supported by State funds |

This report focuses primarily on the three credit modes that receive state support: degree-credit courses, nondegree-credit courses, and noncredit courses. The fourth category, *community service education*, is described less fully because these are "fee-supported" courses; that is to say there are no state dollars that support these courses. Nevertheless, community service courses do adhere to standards and serve a particular curricular need.

## Degree-Credit Courses

Degree-credit courses count toward the associate degree, and also must either transfer or count toward a vocational certification, or both. A high proportion of occupational courses are also transfer courses. Students may earn occupational certificates for successful completion of a series of required courses; or they may complete only as many individual courses as they need to secure, maintain or upgrade employment.

Degree recipients typically transfer or enter work in an occupational field. Degree completion is especially high in those technical and professional occupations, such as nursing, where there are clear standards or license requirements; or where industry treats such a degree as a minimum qualification (e.g., drafting).

### Related Issues

1. *Maintaining Quality.* Efforts to assure consistently high rigor, currency and effectiveness to degree-credit courses are intensifying as a primary focus of both the Chancellor's Office and the statewide Academic Senate effort (with strong support being given by the Council of Chief Instructional Officers and the Association of Occupational Educators).

2. *Articulation of Courses.* Strong courses that would otherwise be transferable may not match the specific expectations of a given transfer institution, thus causing a student to have to repeat the course upon transfer. Intersegmental cooperation is being sought in the resolution of this matter.

3. *Applied Academics.* High quality, nontraditional courses that meet federal initiatives and student needs, such as those integrating academic and occupational content, may not be accepted in transfer by those unfamiliar with such approaches or the mandate behind them.

Issues two and three cause delays to students, may discourage transfer, and cost California additional dollars.

## Nondegree-Credit Courses

Nondegree-credit courses are critical to the mission of the California Community Colleges as they are the mechanism by which underprepared students gain access to the transfer and vocational programs that fulfill the primary function of the California Community Colleges.

Students receive credit for "nondegree-credit" courses, but that credit does not apply to the associate degree nor does it transfer to baccalaureate institutions. Section 55002(b) of Title 5, *California Code of Regulations*, limits nondegree-credit courses to only four types of courses:

> (A) precollegiate basic skills courses as defined in Section 55502(d) of this Division; [*These are courses in reading, writing, English as a Second Language, and mathematics that provide intensive, focused preparation specifically designed to enable underprepared students to achieve, as rapidly as possible, the college-level proficiencies necessary to succeed in rigorous, degree-credit courses. Precollegiate basic skills courses are sequenced to provide a curriculum that meets degree and certificate prerequisites. Statute requires that students be limited to earning a maximum of 30 semester or 45 quarter units in precollegiate basic skills instruction, with certain exceptions. Precollegiate basic skills courses account for the largest proportion of enrollments in the nondegree-credit curriculum.*]
>
> (B) courses designed to enable students to succeed in college-level work (including, but not limited to, college orientation and guidance courses, and discipline-specific preparatory courses such as biology, history, or electronics) that integrate basic skills instruction throughout and assign grades partly upon the demonstrated mastery of those skills; [*Examples of these courses include Pre-Biology or Applied Learning Theory.*]
>
> (C) precollegiate occupational preparation courses designed to provide foundation skills for students preparing for entry into college-level occupational courses or programs; [*Examples of these courses include Pre-Electronic, Introduction to Mechanical Techniques or Occupational Problem-Solving.*]
>
> (D) essential occupational instruction for which meeting the standards of Section 55002(a) is neither necessary nor required. [*Examples of these courses include Cosmetology or Truck Driving.*]

### Related Issues

1. *Availability of sufficient sections* of precollegiate basic skills courses. As colleges have been forced to downsize in response to budget cuts, some basic skills sections have been eliminated. Potentially, this situation could have two seriously detrimental effects. The pool of students fully prepared to enroll and succeed in the degree-credit and transfer curriculum shrinks. Without

sufficient sections of precollegiate basic skills courses, students will be tempted to enroll in degree-credit and transfer courses for which they are unprepared.

2. *Inadequate Funding.* Basic skills continues to be the largest component of all unfunded full-time equivalent students, amounting to $58 million in 1992-93. The funds available for growth in basic skills (credit and noncredit) is $19 million.

3. *Telecommunications and Distance Education.* Greater use of technology for instruction, faculty and staff development, and meetings between college staff and Chancellor's Office staff could provide some needed flexibility to deal with issue number one.

## Noncredit Courses

Noncredit courses, also known as adult education courses, are designed to meet the needs and goals of students who may neither need nor desire unit credit. Noncredit courses may provide students with skills to survive and participate fully in their communities—politically, socially, and economically.

Although noncredit has a primary purpose very different from nondegree and degree credit instruction, it can also serve to provide transition to credit courses. Often the initial point of access to higher education for students from underrepresented groups is through noncredit instruction.

In 1992-93, 81 of the 107 California Community Colleges offered noncredit instruction, although 16 colleges accounted for 80 percent of all noncredit full-time equivalent student (FTES). The distribution of noncredit FTES by subject category is not readily available but a 1989-90 survey by the Association of Community and Continuing Education (ACCE) of eleven colleges, comprising 61 percent of all noncredit attendance, indicated that the largest proportion of instruction is in English as a Second Language (39 percent), followed by short-term vocational courses (21 percent), instruction for older adults (14 percent), high school diploma courses (6 percent), and citizenship training (5 percent).

While systemwide data on the transition of noncredit students to the full credit curriculum is not yet available, the Chancellor's Office Management Information System (MIS) data base for 12 selected districts indicates that 12,572, or seven percent of the students enrolled exclusively in noncredit courses in fall 1990, subsequently enrolled in at least one credit class by spring 1993.

Perhaps a more complete picture of this interrelationship can be seen in the relative size of the overlap between credit and noncredit instruction. For the 1992-93 academic year, there were 553,373 noncredit students statewide. Of these, 139,778,

or slightly more than 25 percent, were enrolled in both credit and noncredit courses concurrently.

The Commission on Innovation report, *Choosing the Future: An Action Agenda for Community Colleges*, points out that "California's society and economy depend on virtually all citizens becoming literate and developing higher skills," and that the need for adult basic education (ABE), literacy and English as a second language (ESL) courses "has grown as increasing numbers of underprepared and limited English proficient students come to the colleges for help."

**Related Issues**

1. *Challenges to mutual agreements* between community college and unified school districts have come to the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges and the California Department of Education for resolution.

   Local high school and unified school districts have requested that community colleges transfer their noncredit programs to the school districts along with the FTES generated to support the programs. The school districts claim that the *Education Code* gives them the responsibility to offer ABE, high school diploma, ESL, and citizenship courses. Using this same reasoning, many of the approximately 150 new adult schools starting up since July 1, 1993 (made possible with the passage of AB 1321 in 1992, now *Education Code* Section 52616.18) are offering these courses without negotiating a mutual agreement with the local community colleges as required by the legislation. Many of these schools have communicated that their goal is to establish new programs and then request the colleges to transfer their programs and funding.

2. *Maintaining Collaboration.* Collaboration among the multiple providers of noncredit adult education has been under way statewide since 1988, particularly with the creation of an Interim Adult Education Steering Committee. Improvements in access, quality, and accountability are being developed, including a comparable data collection system and model program standards for noncredit adult education categories. Federal funding made available by the California Department of Education, supported the existence of the Interim Committee; however, that support ceased December 31, 1993. Staff expects to bring a set of recommendations as part of a "Strategic Plan for Adult Education" to the Board of Governors in November of 1994. This report will outline, among other things, proposed ongoing collaborative structures to govern the delivery of adult education and coordinate program policies among major providers.

3. *Lack of Administrative Support.* California Department of Education (CDE) receives and disseminates all federal funds for noncredit adult education Adult Basic Education (ABE). In 1993-94, 17 colleges received federal Section 321 funds through CDE in the amount of $1,968,928. However, the Chancellor's Office receives no federal funds to support noncredit adult education efforts.

Chancellor's Office staff is currently working with CDE staff to ensure that all colleges are notified and have the opportunity to apply to CDE for federal Section 321 funding for 1994-95.

## Community Service Classes–Accreditation Standard

This category of courses refer to classes, seminars, lecture forum series, workshops, and conferences which receive no state funding. All expenses are paid either by student enrollment fees, co-sponsorships, employers, or by fund raisers. There are no fiscal reports filed with the Chancellor's Office. No credit is given. Records are kept exclusively by the local community college district.

Because there are minimal reporting requirements in this category, the full extent of systemwide activity and involvement in this area is unknown. Through the auspices of the Association of Community and Continuing Education (ACCE), an organization of the California Community Colleges, we know that community service departments vary in size in direct proportion to the importance placed in this educational service by local governing boards and the extent and abilities of marketing efforts conducted by the college in this arena. Many community service departments have a budget which exceed $500,000 and serve more than 8,000 students per year.

Examples of the educational opportunities that may be offered through the *community services* include avocational and recreational courses, cultural activities, community development activities and recreational activities.

### Related Issues

1. *Consonance with the Mission.* There is a wide array of course offerings and great creativity in the marketing campaigns conducted by colleges in this area. This has resulted in the exploration of educational arenas which at times appear to be questionable in their relationship to the mission of the California Community Colleges. Since these courses are offered based on local demand and are not supported by state dollars, the policy and governance question facing local trustees is, what is appropriate to offer under the auspices of the college, and how do these courses support the overall mission?

2. *Systemwide Reporting.* To what degree should the Chancellor's Office gather data on the extent of community service education courses? A related question also has to do with the authority of the systemwide office to require reports, however minimal, for activities not supported by state dollars.

3. *Uniform Fiscal Reimbursement and Support Criteria.* There is great variability between colleges regarding requirements and percentages of operating costs charged to community service programs. While there are some minimum systemwide standards to ensure that state resources are not used to support

community services, conversely, there are no standardized criteria placed on these programs to help subsidize the rest of the community college curriculum.

## Conclusion

California Community Colleges offer community service, noncredit, nondegree-credit, and degree-credit curriculum in order further the system's commitment to open access. The system achieves student success by providing the instructional and support services that enable students, whatever their educational beginning, to transition through this layered curriculum to achieve their individual educational goals.